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MICHAEL TENDING THE FEVER-SMITTEN FAMILY.

GOLDEN HILLS; OR, SINGLE INFLUENCE:

A TALE OF RIBANDISM AND THE IRISH FAMINE.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—MR. KINGSTON'S CONFESSION.

WEARILY the hours passed over the watcher by the fever-stricken peasant. He fetched a pail from a house half a mile away, filled it with water, and kept the lips of the dying man wet with cool drops, which dried up momentarily from his burning breath.

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The children did not sleep, nor speak; either would have been a relief from the monotonous gaze of their sad still eyes. Fevered as their father was, their wretched limbs—almost resembling canes in attenuation—were numb with cold. A fire had been in one corner of the shed; only ashes remained, and an old tin vessel, which he supposed had cooked their porridge while the mother lived. Some half-dressed Indian meal and water was in

it; but the children rejected that semblance of food.

"I'll get a bit of fire," thought Michael, "an' maybe they'd ate the stirabout if it was boiled; the neighbours can't but give me a couple of sods:" and, fastening the door with a stone against it, he set off to the house where he had borrowed the pail. But the people there would not admit him. "We're bad enough oursel's, without bringing the faver atop of us," a voice said.

"Why then, that ye may be never thrated as ye're thratin' me," he answered good-humouredly: "sure, if we didn't help one another, what wud become of half the world? An' it's clane against my principles to let a crather die like a dog, if I could help him a bit. At any rate, I don't want much from ye now, only the seed of a fire—a couple of coals off the hearth, an' a couple of sods out of the turf rick, which I'll help meself to, with yer lave."

"Ay, do so," said another voice—that of the woman. "We'll put the coals outside for ye."

"That's a good honest pleasant voice, anyhow," cried Michael, with a touch of flattery; "an' may ye never want a good turn, ma'am!"

When he came back for the fire, he found beside it a cloth containing some oaten-meal. As the husband's tones were objurgating within the house, he thought best not to notice the gift. His walk back to the fever-hut was necessarily slow, as the fire required care, and his means of carrying it were only two flat stones. Doubling a corner of the road, he met a woman.

"Why, then, good-morrow to you, Sall, an' save you kindly! an' where are you from, the day?"

"I was mindin' people above on the mountain, that had the faver, Michael Couran, so keep out from me unless ye want to get it; an' it kills 'most every one."

But instead of shunning her, he laid down his burden for a minute, to shake hands with her. "I don't believe, meself, that the faver or any other sickness 'll take any one the Lord hasn't ordained," was his remark: "an' so the masher gev me lave—me bein' an outside servant, that hasn't recourse into the house—to stop awhile wid a poor fellow that's above here. An' he has two little childher, Sall, that's just dyin' of the hunger; I was goin' to thry wud they ate a little of the oaten-male stirabout, if 'twas made for 'em."

Sally came with him to the hut. She peered into the worn and gaunt face of the dying man, and recognised him. "Oh, then, Pat Maugan, you crathur, is it you? that had the good farm on Slieve-more, an' often gave poor Sally the good breakfast an' dinner! An' are these the weenochs that was once stout an' hearty, runnin' about the fields afther the lambs—an' that I see christened wid such grand christenins?—Michael Couran, there used to be in that man's barn a dinner for the reapers that the likes of it wasn't in the parish; barrows of praties an' tubs of new milk, an' oul' Maurice the piper to play for 'em whin the work was done! an' now to have him come to this!"

She sat down with her chin on her knees, and appeared to give herself up to mournful reflections. Michael noticed that her bonnets were gone, and

her thin light-coloured hair hung down to her shoulders in jagged ends, resembling tow: she looked thin and hungry herself. Yet he had heard of her kindly offices towards many families in the fever; for though her brain was not sound, poor Sally's woman-heart was whole.

"Look here," he said, attracting her attention gently; "be blowin' the fire while I give this crathur a drink. As soon as the water boils, put in the oaten-male, Sally avourneen. Though indeed it's to ax yer pardon I ought, for spakin' a word about makin' stirabout or anythin' else, seein' the women's a dale handier at it than ever the men could be. If them childher wud ever close their eyes, 'twould be an ease to me!" he said in a lower tone.

"Them!" she looked over her shoulder. "Their blood in their body is turned into water, an' it shines out in their eyes; an' the smell of the earth is gatherin' about 'em already." She blew the sods vigorously with the skirt of her petticoat, and a blaze sprang up. "Bring one of 'em over to me," she said; "maybe he'd feel the warmth." The little body, light as a doll, was laid on her lap: she chafed its shrunken arms.

"Broth wud be the only chance for them: hot soup wud revive them, if anything could," said Michael, as he stood by. "But sure the nearest soup-shop is down at the Hill, four miles off. An' now that I see that weenoch in the light, throth he has a look of my own little Patsey at home; the hair is like, anyhow." The comparison caused the father to put up an internal prayer for his child.

"Sally, agrab," he exclaimed suddenly, "wud ye stay here, if I brought up the broth from the Hill below?"

"I'll not lave Pat Maugan till I see the last of him," was her reply: "many's the day he kep the warm corner of the fire for poor Sally."

The fevered man turned his eyes towards them gratefully. "May the Lord in heaven bless ye both for ever an' ever," he feebly articulated. "I'm dyin' aisy by the manes of yer kindness. Whisht!" he added, fearfully staring towards the half-open door; "isn't them the dogs I hear, comin'?"

It was the distant wheels of Mr. Kingston's car, returning from the mountain farm. Michael jumped on the driver's seat. "We found a famous nurse, sir," said he: "cracked Sall came in, an' she knew the poor fellow long ago, an' said she'd stay by him to the very last. Maybe yer honour wud remember him—Pat Maugan, that had a farm on Slieve-more, before the bad times."

"Can it be possible?" said Mr. Kingston and William in a breath. "Pat Maugan of Slieve-more!" They recollected the comely broad-built farmer, who had regularly brought his rent to the office, each May and November; had given up his holdings, with a touching submission, when in justice to the landlord he could no longer retain them; and had retired somewhere out of ken, among the labouring masses of the people, to hide his indigence, and earn a livelihood, if possible. Thus had the struggle for existence ended.

Michael obtained the donkey and cart, to bring

him again to the hut where poor Mangan lay. The soup was heated and given to the children; it appeared rather to pain them than to do any good. "Twill be that way for a while," observed Sally; "but you'll see to-morrow they'll be different; they'll get hungry again, if the life in them is strong enough."

Scenes of such sadness as this were not spoken of at Golden Hills by William or his father, when they returned home. Mr. Kingston doubted the advantage of paining the sensitive hearts of Lina and her mother with tales of woe which they could not alleviate, when every day brought continual claims on their sympathy and benevolence. He had sometimes thought that his daughter was years older, in care and gravity of spirit, than was natural to her age; and he knew that this arose from the circumstances surrounding her life, and the unwonted duties that had pressed upon her. But with all the strength of his own nature, he honoured her steady persistence in the plans of practical good she had formed; he respected her character with no ordinary esteem; and Lina felt that a stronger bond of union existed between her father's heart and her own, than had been before these troublesome years.

The "Times" arriving that evening, contained the memorable letter from Commodore Coffin, of her Majesty's ship "Scourge," describing his visit to Skull and its neighbourhood. Accustomed as the Golden Hills family were to scenes of misery, this was a still deeper gulf of wretchedness than any they had contemplated. Mr. Kingston sat with his head on his hands, while William read aloud the sad recital. His posture excited Lina to doubt whether he was quite well; but then—he never was so buoyant lately as she remembered him three years ago, before his hair had grown so white at the temples. Her dear father! how she loved him! what a warm throb filled her heart as she noted his careworn attitude, and longed to take to herself some of his anxieties, and bear them in his stead!

He raised his face. "There is a verse in one of the Psalms that struck me lately: 'He turneth a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.' It is just so with this unfortunate country; I believe the famine to be a judicial punishment for bloodshed lying upon it."

Lina looked up from her work. Then, her father had been reading the Bible for himself, and with the attention which makes reality of the inspired words. She had never known of his doing so before. Surely that Divine Word would not return void from its mission, but would be the seed of spiritual life in his precious soul!

"Strange it is," he further said, "how from the faults of men their punishment is evolved, as from a plant its fruit. The slothful character and improvident habits of our Irish peasantry have originated a vast proportion of their present misery. This suffering has been laid in store for them by generations of indolence and animalism."

William remarked: "I have read somewhere of a saying, that as nations are not immortal, so God judges them in this world."

"Ay, and individuals likewise. No man's

doings but are followed by a shadow of retribution, tracking his footsteps pertinaciously, and surely visiting him with a suitable vengeance of sorrow."

"But," rejoined William, "are not many now suffering for ancestral faults and sins? The little children, what have they done?"

"What did the children of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, when they were swallowed down alive into the pit? Or the children in Sodom and Gomorrah, when fire rained from heaven? This is one of the questions which may safely be left to the solution of Infinite Justice."

"And Infinite Mercy," Lina added, gently.

"Perhaps an early and certain heaven is better for them, even though the way be through pain, than a prolonged life on earth," William said.

"Why, after the longest and the happiest life, all we hope for is the same heaven," his father answered. "Ah, my children, I have lately thought that we all lay too much stress on the perishable needs and pleasures of mortality, and have too little consideration for the one thing needful."

Never had he spoken such words before, and his calm face flushed slightly at the avowal. Whence this cowardice, even in the firmest natures, to confess that the interests of the soul are becoming paramount? Why doth the traitor heart hold back, when the lips would speak of things eternal? Any subject is more easily introduced, any theme more fluently dwelt upon, than this, which is most important of all matters that can engage the attention of our immortal faculties.

"I have been a man of business all my life," continued Mr. Kingston, with a little effort; "I have never left a question unsettled which it was of any moment to decide; I have been accurate and clear in every arrangement; my books have been kept with precision, and my affairs are in order. But not long since"—he stood up before the fire now, and leaned his arm upon the mantel-piece, looking into the burning embers—"the thought visited me, that I, who am so exact in temporal arrangements, had left one matter undecided; that a piece of property more valuable to me than everything else I possess, was in peril—on the verge of irremediable loss. Should I not instantly make sure of that valuable possession? should I not determine a question involving the mightiest interests of my life?"

Irrepressible tears were now flowing silently down Lina's face—tears of deep joy and thankfulness. Nobody observed them: all eyes were directed to the figure of the father, who, after a moment's pause, resumed: "And I found written, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Also, 'If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.' Here was my warrant of exclusion from heaven. I was not born again; I had not the spirit of Christ."

Another momentary silence: he turned himself towards the listeners, and looked upon them.

"Then I prayed. I besought the Omnipotent God to give me this mighty gift of regeneration. By myself I could no more call up a single feeling of love to him, or of trust in Christ, than a dead

man could make his heart beat. It must be altogether a supernatural work, done in me by the Holy Spirit, who is God himself. I prayed for this, earnestly as I would for human life, were it at stake. And I found another verse, which says: 'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' Now, I take these words simply as they stand; they must be truth itself, for Jesus Christ spoke them; and I have asked God for his Holy Spirit, fervently: it is my greatest desire to have that divine gift; therefore, on the ground of his own promise, I believe that I have obtained my request, and that I stand justified before God through the obedience of Christ, *my Saviour*."

With a smile he turned to Lina: "I could not have said that personal pronoun a month since," he added. She was thankful that he took no notice of the deep emotion visible in her face; but his eye dwelt on it for a moment.

When all had gone to bed that night, Lina came down-stairs again, softly. Her father was in the study still: he had till just now been giving William a variety of directions respecting the business which he was to conduct in his absence, and packing some papers to take with him to Dublin. Lina entered noiselessly, as he sat with his back to the door; when he perceived her, he drew her towards him.

"Papa, you have made me so happy this night!"

"Dear child, I thank God who enabled me. You were 'in Christ before me;' will you pray for your father?"

"We have got a new relationship," he said afterwards, "which will endure into the eternal world; even the spiritual relationship which is through our Lord Jesus. I am stronger for the confession this evening, Lina."

CHAPTER XXXIV.—A SHADOW OF FEAR.

In the grey of the next wintry morning, while yet dawn was weakly struggling with superincumbent clouds, Mr. Kingston set off on his journey. A line of rail had been just completed to a provincial city some fifty miles away; he would reach this by coach and steamboat from Castlebay, and thence travel to the metropolis.

The day seemed very long to Lina, owing to her unusually early rising to get her father's breakfast before he started. Her pupils met as usual; the class had swelled considerably in number since little Harry was first introduced to it; for she could not refuse application from the destitute, attracted by the single daily meal which she gave her scholars; nor could she lightly put aside opportunity of extended good, placed before her by Him whom she recognised as her Lord. She endeavoured to find industrial employment for all the little hands: as a beginning, she had taught netting to some, and set them to instruct others. Now they manufactured cabbage and fruit nets well, which found a ready sale through the kind Miss Simpson, in England. Without such means of gaining a fund, Lina could not have continued her school, and given food to the children.

The elder girls' work was improving in quality, so that Miss Simpson could give better prices for it than previously. The moral change which a habit of industry was working on their characters and looks, cheered their teacher oftentimes. Carefulness and tidiness were insensibly gaining on them; self-respect began to be a principle in their minds.

Alek, under the quickening which his feelings had lately gotten, was uneasy about his young brother's education, and not satisfied with the classical teaching of a rustic pedagogue, who presided over the national school of the district, and came for some hours weekly to instruct Frank in Virgil and Sallust. So he had proposed that the boy should come to Dublin, and live with himself, in order to closer study.

"Darling old Golden Hills!" exclaimed Frank, impulsively; "don't I love every stone of it—every blade of grass in the fields—every wave on that big sea! I wonder whether I could bring myself to leave it at all, Lina."

And Lina fully entered into his enthusiasm for their beloved home. Others might say that the situation was bleak, that the absence of woodland gave the view a barrenness adverse to soft beauty; but these children of Golden Hills thought no place so enjoyable as their nest by the cliffs of the wild Atlantic main. Born in the sound of its ceaseless surge, its music was more to them than the most civilized loveliness of calmer scenes; the blue expanse of waters fairer than miles of waving harvests; the scream of sea-birds more attractive than night-ingale's melody.

Lina was kneeling before the open window of her room on the following evening—it had been a soft showery day, and the air was cool and grateful—when she heard her mother's voice calling, in a strange hurried tone: she hastened down-stairs. Mrs. Kingston was in the hall, and held a letter in her hand.

"Your father has been taken ill—some of us must go to him at once—I have a few lines from him, written in pencil—and so unlike his writing! My poor Richard!"

Truly her daughter's heart turned cold. She read the letter: it was dated from the city at which he was to have taken the train, and where he had been stopped by illness. "You or Lina had better come to me," he wrote: "I may have the fever."

Her mother wept abundantly; Lina could not shed a tear. In a sort of maze she went about packing their things, and was surprised afterwards to find that she had forgotten nothing. Hardly a word did she speak: she had no very clear comprehension of the depth of the misery which threatened her. Yet the sentence, "I may have the fever," was repeated over and over by her thoughts, like some refrain; and in the darkness appeared as burnt in bright letters on the blank gloom.

All her eagerness was, to get to where he was lying ill. The night seemed hours longer than any other she had ever passed. Her dear father! was he tossing restlessly on his hot pillows, with no loving hand to arrange them freshly, or moaning

in fevered sleep, without a cool touch to bathe his temples? Such pictures her imagination conjured up incessantly. At last from her burning eyes flowed tears, as her unbelief was rebuked, and the ever-watchful care of our Father for his children was presented to her mind as all-sufficient. The verse in Psalm ciii, which was the first she had taught to little Harry, awoke in her own memory with soothing power: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

She slept quietly and deeply till her mother touched her. Mrs. Kingston was already dressed. "I did not disturb you, dear, till the last moment," she said; "for you will want all the strength you can get, to-day. I have fastened the trunks, and they are gone down-stairs."

Lina dressed herself quickly. In the bustle of departure there was no leisure for sorrowful thoughts. But all the long day, while the coach plodded on wearily from Castlebay to the town where they met the steamer, memory and anticipation were busy. Her mother's wretched look recalled her to a consciousness of how selfish she was. "He is mamma's whole world; I am young, and no blow can be so heavy to me as to her," and she leaned towards her and whispered—"Darling mother, God is very merciful; he will spare papa, and give him to us again." Thenceforward she remembered the present duty, and did all in her power to soften her mother's anxiety.

Lamps were lighted through the city streets, as the car rattled rapidly from the steamboat wharf to the hotel whence Mr. Kingston had written.

AN ADVENTURE IN THE DESERT.

PART II.

THE long-expected Bedouins at length arrived. One morning, a cloud of dust along the distant horizon announced their approach, and presently they became more distinctly visible. They came galloping forward at full speed. A promiscuous crowd of camels, horses, and asses, whose backs were unencumbered with any kind of housing, bore their riders along with surprising swiftness. They were sometimes seen through, and sometimes lost in, the clouds of dust which they raised. They brandished their swords, sounded them on their shields, and shouted exultingly as they advanced; and their vanity must have been highly gratified on seeing our whole camp turn out from curiosity to witness their approach.

To these picturesque beings, ground on our right was assigned. Here they settled down in a wonderfully tasteful sort of confusion. Viewed from a little distance, the strange wild figures of the men, moving about in warrior guise, or basking at length in the sun; the sleek and beautiful figures of the horses, standing in every variety of posture; the camels, rearing or reposing their awkward forms, or remaining fixed in the patient motionlessness of still life from sunrise till sunset; the incessant and varying gleam of arms, and the

shifting shadows of objects before only known to us as a pageant of poetry; composed a picture so completely Arabian, that I felt the keenest regret at having no knowledge of that "serene and silent art" that would have enabled me to preserve in my portfolio something like a correct impress of its charm.

It was among this wild swarm of Bedouins, stretched on the ground under the shadow of Arab cloaks, supported by their long spears, that I first read the "Arabian Nights" alternately with the "Tales of the Genii;" and it is to this circumstance that I mainly attribute it, that the whole military adventure I record has left so vivid an impression on my mind. Sometimes I would see our red-coats and the Bedouins at a mimic fight together. But between them there was about the same difference in these sham combats as there was between the formidable double-edged Arab sword and the useless spits with which our officers were at that time equipped, or rather encumbered; and the contrast was still greater in other respects. The tall form, muscular, well-built limbs of the desert warrior, fully developed by constant exercise, his sallow complexion, long black hair, dark eye of fire, set off, with the best effect, by his tunic, turban, and sleeveless cloak; the spear which he carried in his hand, the shield upon his arm, with his sword, and his kreesc in his belt; completed a figure which, when mounted on a fine horse, was really inspiring to look at. But the domestic habitudes of these descendants of Ishmael most pleased me. Their animals they regarded quite as part of the family, partaking with them, often from the same basket, of dates, rice, and dried fish, to which the quadrupeds seemed to be, in lack of more suitable food, very well reconciled. In the evenings, moreover, the primitive character of these people in their worship came most strikingly out. Separating into bands, the Bedouins went out, as the sun sank behind the mountains, to perform their orisons. After casting handfuls of sand upon their heads, they bent, covering their faces with their hands, to the earth, and muttered their invocations. They would then all stand up for a while, and go through various prostrations and genuflexions, whilst the softened, slant streams of the setting sun, gleaming upon them, would give them quite a fantastic appearance. But before these living pictures, which seemed to have as much of imagination as of reality in them, had lost their charm of novelty, we were on the move.

The breaking up of our camp was a stirring spectacle. Tents taking down, camels loading, regiments forming into line, officers mounting, the motley variety of Indian, Arab, and European costumes, formed some of the details of its organized disorder. Our sultry marches that followed, with a tropical blazing sun on our heads and the burning sands under our feet, were the only real suffering we had to endure, but it was by no means a slight one. The fatigue itself of marching fifteen or twenty miles a-day, in such a country and climate, was much severer than that of a march double that distance in Europe. The first day sufficed to peel the skin off most of our faces, which we were obliged to

invest in our silk handkerchiefs, to keep them from further scarification, till they got mired to scorchings. In crossing the ghauts (mountains), three of our men, who were in charge of some elephants that had been procured to drag a few heavy pieces of artillery through a very difficult pass, died of the heat, which was more than once intensely aggravated by a delusive refreshment which sometimes cheated our senses. Once I recollect, during a day of more than usual fatigue, a sudden exclamation of joy burst from nearly a whole regiment. The village where we were to encamp was suddenly before us. Its date groves, towers, huts, transparent springs, even camels laden with water, coming out to meet us, were all vividly portrayed. Alas! it was only by our imagination, on the illuminated sands. It was some time before we found out that this was a *mirage*. Some, whose fancies were oriental, then conjured up mosques and tanks; others, streams, villas, and flocks; and some were animated by the inspiring vision of a stag-chase sweeping by them. After this, we had another ghaut to pass, from which we had an extensive view, and got sight of the distant desert, which appeared like a sea in restless undulation.

I recollect not much more of the incidents of our march to Ben-Boo-Ali. We had nightly apprehensions of attacks on our outposts, but were allowed to advance quite unmolested; chiefly owing, I believe, to the scouting watch our Bedouin allies kept up for us far round about in all directions. At these outposts the officer on duty might enjoy the contemplation of such a night scene as is never seen in a European clime. The intense and perfectly cloudless blue of the firmament, and the brightness of the heavenly host, much more numerous visible than in western latitudes, canopied uniform barrenness and lifelessness—except the little green quiet date grove, with its pleasant noise of water running perpetually from the wells, and the sleeping camp, speckling with its white tents the surrounding waste—made the sky so much the absorbing object of attraction, that one might understand at once why the Arabs and Chaldeans were the first discoverers of the science of astronomy. But, of all the stars that studded the vault of heaven, the officer and sentinels on these occasions were most on the look-out for the one which Milton calls

“ Fairest of stars, last in the train of Night,”

for its apparition announced that the picket would be speedily released from its watch.

At last, we came in sight of Ben-Boo-Ali. At some distance it looked very grand indeed, especially after the barren, bare, unsightly, unadorned track we had waded through. It was situated in the close neighbourhood of three of the largest date groves we had seen, and was sheltered by a fourth, which lay in the midst of them. It might be considered as the great metropolis of the whole Wahabee tribe in this part of Arabia. Several towers, three or four of them of ample circumference and of great height, rose up from among the trees. From the tops of two of them we discerned the

flickering of arms, and men moving about, and were immediately afterwards saluted by a discharge from one of our own guns, taken from Captain J. At this time the bones of poor T——’s men, which lay scattered about, bleaching in the sun, the skulls grinning horribly through their white teeth upon us, were at our feet; and our martial ardour was not a little moved thereby to retrieve the former disaster.

This, however, would not have been a very easy task, had the Wahabees, trusting less to their personal bravery and prowess, displayed but ever so little skill in military tactics; and for the following reason. In order to attack the enemy, or to bring our guns to bear on their town with any effect, it was necessary to traverse the largest and most thickly planted of the groves I have mentioned. In doing this, it was impossible to preserve even an appearance of rank or order. The trees stood so close together, and the sands were so heavy, that we were obliged to scramble through them, man by man, the best way we could. But to these natural impediments, the Wahabees had more than sufficient time to add artificial ones. They might have cut down the trees or thrown up barricades to block our way; or, should such precaution be considered too scientific to have been expected from them, they might at least have planted ambushes in the grove, and have kept up a most deadly fire on us in our passage through it. They suffered us, however, to advance without the slightest opposition; and even when our men issued out, one by one, from the entanglement of the wood into the adjoining plain, which was faced right opposite by another grove, they continued quite passive.

Our whole force was drawn up in two lines—the Europeans in front and the Sepoys in the rear—on this plain, before we saw aught of the enemy. And then, it was only by getting a view of them through telescopes, from one of their towers which we had left behind us, that we found out where they were. There they were—a thrilling spectacle—in the grove just fronting us, their dark figures made apparent by the glitter of their arms—a whole tribe, for the last time under the congenial gloom of their own shades, coiled up for one final spring of desperation, and doomed to perish within a few minutes.

A little firing from a rifle company soon brought them out upon us. It was a sight to move pity, to behold the wild sortie of the poor creatures from their shelter. They rushed forward, a confused crowd, in a frantic manner. At first they shouted, and performed capers like a dance; then they threw stones at us, and appeared quite bewildered what to do, when a discharge from a couple of our field-pieces, that made fearful gaps in the frightened throng, brought them to the possession of their senses. They fired off their firelocks, darted their spears before them, and in a second were wielding, with terrible effect, their double-edged swords on our ranks. Their onset was so sudden, and their mode of attack one for which European soldiers are so little prepared, that they threw the left of our front line, on which they had precipitated themselves, at once into disarray.

Hand-to-hand fights, in which the Wahabees had greatly the superiority in many instances, took place, and they seemed so far to be gaining great advantage, when our commander formed the European part of the force into three sides of a square, and ordered an independent firing to be kept up, which soon checked the partial disorder that had taken place. The Wahabees, however, were not yet daunted, and it was not until they had got into our rear, and had perceived a body of fifteen hundred fresh troops prepared to support, in case of need, those with whom they had already been engaged, that they were seized with a panic, flung down their arms, and fled. In little less than half an hour the whole affair was over. Of our men, about sixty were killed and wounded. Of the Wahabees, we counted next day nearly five hundred, dead or dying on the field of action.

Without further opposition worth mentioning, we took possession of Ben-Boo-Ali. We slept that night in our cloaks, under the walls. The next morning we visited the place in detail. It was only a larger Zoar; but its desolation was most melancholy. Its empty huts; the scattered housewife's implements; the signs of recent habitations, where there were no inhabitants; the idle wells; the water-courses unsupplied with water; the trampled gardens, but yesterday neat and flourishing; the despair preceding immediate destruction, that had thrown everything hither and thither; the groves themselves, so bereft and solitary; all seemed to mourn the sudden catastrophe; whilst our prisoners, huddled together, a wretched band in deplorable plight, looked on with lack-lustre eyes at the spoliation of all their household goods and treasures, by their careless, joyous, laughing, and joking victors. Everything portable, of sufficient value, such as spears, keerees, swords, and shields, some of which were inlaid with silver, rewarded the searchers after such spoils; and all the large stores of dates, rice, and dried fish, of late the common property of the whole Wahabee settlement, with their hoard of coin and precious stones, by no means inconsiderable, were disposed of to the Imaum, and so converted for us into prize-money. The stronghold itself, before we left, was set fire to and razed to the ground by order of that prince. To gratify him, we remained before Ben-Boo-Ali till the five hundred corpses of the slain, bloated to an enormous and frightful size by the heat of the sun, sent forth an odour that would have bred a fever in our camp, had we remained much longer. On picket at night, one might see flights of vultures descending on the bodies, flapping their wings over them, whilst their busy beaks were at work. Such are the horrors of war, even on a small scale.

Sunning themselves on the ramparts of Bombay, about a year afterwards, I saw some of our Wahabee prisoners, and, among others, one of their chiefs, with whom I had made some acquaintance, and could communicate by signs. As the bird in its cage sings happily of fields and groves, so the Arab, in his captivity, solaces himself with the recollection of his arid sand plains, his waste ocean desert, and the green spot on its border, his

night skies of transcendent splendour, his nightly forays and onslaughts, and all the rude simplicities of his wild life. So, at least, I interpreted the kindling eye and animated gesticulation of the old Arab chief I have alluded to, when I spoke to him of Ben-Boo-Ali. This is my last reminiscence of my military adventure in Arabia.

A GOOD MAN'S RETROSPECT OF LIFE.

BUT, you may ask, should I be willing, such as I have found it, to go over life again? I have heard many express the sentiment, though not in the poetry of Cowper—

" Worlds should not bribe me back to tread
Again life's dreary waste,
To see the future o'erspread
With all the gloomy past."

But such language is not for me. I should not shrink from the proposal of repetition. "Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life." My duties have not been burdening and irksome. My trials have been few compared with my comforts. My pleasures have been cheap and simple, and therefore very numerous. I have enjoyed without satiety the seasons and the sceneries of nature. I have relished the bounties of Providence, using them with moderation and thankfulness. I have delighted in the means of grace; unutterable have been my delights in studying and perusing the Scripture. How have I verified the words of Young:—

"Retire and read thy Bible to be gay!"

Preaching has been the element of my heart and my head. My labours have met with much acceptance—nor have I laboured in vain. I have seldom been without hearing of some instances of usefulness from the pulpit or the press. God has honoured me to call by my labours not a few individuals, even into the ministry. The seat of my residence was, of all others, the place of my preference. My condition has been the happy medium of neither poverty nor riches. I had a most convenient habitation, with a large and lovely garden—a constant source of attraction, exercise, and improvement. I had a sufficient collection of books of all kinds. My wife was a gentlewoman, a saint, and a domestic goddess. My children were fair, and healthy, and dutiful. My friends were many, and cordial, and steady. Where shall I end?

" Call not earth a barren spot,
Pass it not unheeded by
'Tis to man a lovely spot,
Though a lovelier waits on high."

Autobiography of Rev. W. Jay.

THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

FOURTH ARTICLE.

THE southern portion of the iron building, or that nearest the road, is devoted to models, drawings, and descriptions of patented inventions. This department is under the separate management of the Commissioners of Patents, and being partitioned off from the rest of the exhibition, there is a distinct entrance in the centre of the Museum front.

THE PATENT MUSEUM.

The object of the Commissioners in forming this Museum has been, first, to exhibit and illustrate the progress of inventions, such as that of the steam-engine, for the guidance of mechanics and the instruction of the public; and, secondly, to open a library of all specifications and drawings of patents, from the earliest, in 1617, to the most recent entered under the new law.

The pleasure and advantage to be derived from the treasures here stored away, will vary according to the capacity of the observer for grouping and deduction. Without this quality, the Patent department will seem an uninteresting sort of place; with it, no one portion of the South Kensington Museum will perhaps confer an equal amount of satisfaction. It is a matter of no great interest, for example, that a mangle should be made with glass slabs for bearing planes working on glass rollers. Inasmuch as the smoothest possible surface is indicated for mangling purposes, glass would readily have suggested itself, and the man who first adopted glass for that purpose would seem to be no conjuror. True; but now reflect that until very lately the duty on glass would necessarily interfere with its application to this sort of mechanical purpose, and we come to view the glass mangle under quite another aspect. We come to speculate on the damage caused by fiscal regulations on materials of public utility. Filled with these reflections, the eye now wanders about and rests on a number of glass-made instruments with redoubled satisfaction. Yonder pump, for example, wherein a glass tube supplies the place of an ordinary leaden one, is worth thinking on. Occasionally a leaden pump cannot be employed for the pumping of certain kinds of water, without poisoning the latter. A glass-tubed pump may be used without danger; but ere the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been induced to drop the duty on glass, the drinker of such water must either have been poisoned, or he must have done without a pump.

Glancing next at the various screws, and models of screws, employed instead of paddle-wheels to effect propulsion of steam-vessels, there may not be much, if anything, to interest the mind, according to the opinion of a non-reflective observer. But when one comes to think that these little screws have not only changed the construction of every war ship, but have materially disturbed the relationship previously existing between the efficiency of maritime Powers, these screw models become interesting. I notice some which take two or three turns round: they were the first manufactured. I notice others which only take one turn round: they come next. I finally remark that marine screw-propellers now are hardly to be termed screws at all, except by courtesy; they are merely inclined vanes, very much like those of a windmill; and, what seems extraordinary, ships provided with these modern screw-no-screws go through the water all the better for the modification.

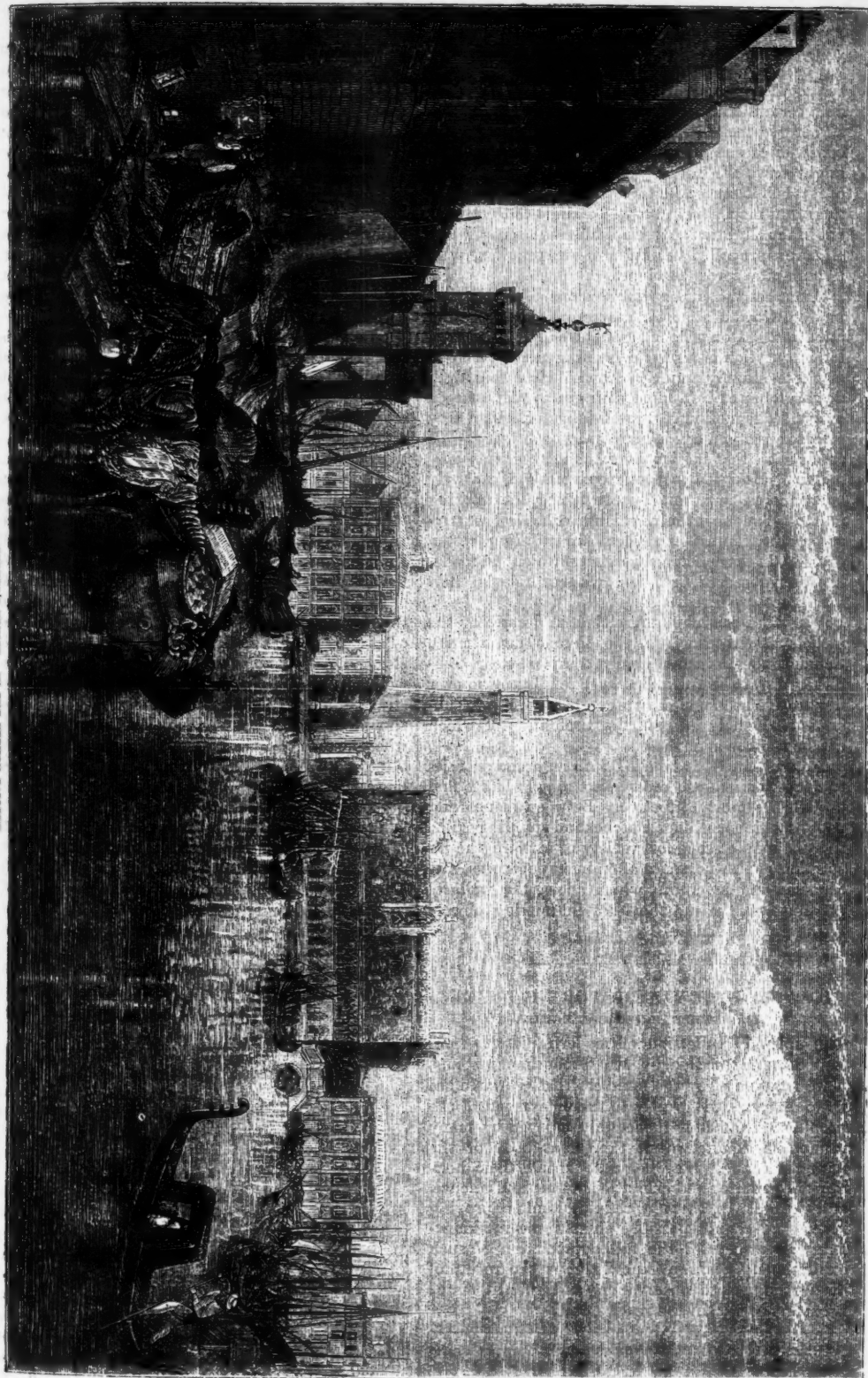
Some curious-looking pieces of fresh beef and mutton next challenge the wanderer's attention. The placard informs us they have been hanging

there ever since January, 1858. Though in a glass case, they are nevertheless exposed to the air, and still remain quite sweet, and free from decomposition. To preserve fresh meat thus, has been made the subject of a patent, the principle of which is capable of easy comprehension. Putridity is nothing more nor less than a sort of fermentation; and it so happens that a certain gas—sulphurous acid gas—is potent to ward off fermentation. Accordingly, if fresh meat be exposed for a certain season to the agency of sulphurous acid gas, it is no longer prone to decomposition. Any method of preserving meat fresh for a long time together, is a great boon to the public. Salting is the ordinary method followed for the preservation of animal substances, as I need not inform the reader; but salting has its disadvantages. Persons who are restricted to salt provisions alone, for a long time together, soon discover that the agent adopted as a preservative of meat is by no means a preservative of health.

Passing on, the eye rests on a duck's foot attached to a paddle-wheel of peculiar form. A mechanic will catch the idea at once; though, to one not a mechanic, the notion is thrown away and valueless altogether. Reflecting on the manner in which the floats of an ordinary paddle-wheel enter the water, it will be easily seen that the effective propelling force of these paddles in the highest degree, is limited to the merest instant of time, namely, when each float is exactly perpendicular to the water's surface. In all other positions there is a great waste of power; when the float of the paddle-wheel strikes the water, the vessel is lifted up. When the same float has traversed the perpendicular, and is in the act of leaving the water, the vessel is pulled down. Now, by altering each float of a paddle-wheel to the similitude of a duck's foot, much of this inconvenience would be obviated. The angle made by each particular float with the water, would not be indeed affected, but the surface of contact of each float with the water would be less, at times when that contact would otherwise take place under injurious conditions.

Whilst yet dealing with the motive power of steam, as applied to the propulsion of ships, a very curious float must be mentioned, as furnishing another to the many examples before extant, of the necessity there is for theory and practice to go hand in hand together. When a wheel or other rotatory mechanical object is mounted in such manner as to facilitate rotation, the bearing points of its axis are usually made of brass, or rather, gun-metal. When the screw system of steam propulsion came into practice, the shaft was made to project into the water through a perforated gun-metal bearing. According to analogy and previous testimony, gun-metal should have been the most eligible material for the purpose in question, whereas in practice it was most unsatisfactory. If the conditions necessary to be fulfilled be reflected upon, some of the difficulties will be made apparent. The nut must necessarily be plunged under water, inasmuch as the revolving screw must be under water; it must permit free rotation, but nevertheless must fit the revolving shaft so tightly that no water must come in. Gun-metal nuts of the dimensions required are very expensive; they were

ROBERT'S VENICE, IN THE YANCOO GALLERY.



found to wear out rapidly, so that a vessel proceeding on a voyage of moderate length was obliged to be provided with several sets. Well, it so happened on a certain occasion, that a vessel having used up all her gun-metal nuts, the engineer, as a make-shift, constructed one of hard wood: that the expedient might serve the nonce, was all that was expected of it; but it served better: though wood is softer than gun-metal, the wooden bearings did not wear out in the slightest appreciable degree: accordingly, all screw-propelled vessels now are provided with *lignum-vitæ* screw bearings.

Amongst the curious applications of mechanical motion, Goodall's mortar movement claims passing attention. Don't be alarmed, reader. The mortar in question is a physic-bruising mortar, not one of those stumpy guns, wherewith rival foes drop down globes of iron filled with gunpowder at each other. The motion of a pestle in a mortar is a very complex motion, as all know who have tried. To accomplish that motion by machinery was no easy matter. How it has been accomplished can only be rendered apparent by consulting the working model. Amongst the ingenious mechanical contrivances, too, there is one here for winding cotton on reels, in those diagonal patterns which the reader has often observed, doubtless, without knowing how it was accomplished.

We will not occupy more time in describing the models stored away in the Patent department. Some of them are necessarily complex, their complexity only to be unravelled by carefully poring over illustrative sectional drawings; others refer to subjects of homely interest, the usefulness of which can be at once appreciated.

As each model is labelled with an account of its construction and use, each visitor may be left to find out what is most attractive. Between pianos and paper-making machines, watches and spinning-mills, there is ample scope for variety of taste in the inspection. The portraits of eminent engineers, mechanists, and inventors, which adorn the walls of the museum, are not the least interesting objects to the general visitor.

HOW TO ENJOY A PICTURE GALLERY.

THE SHEEPSHANKS COLLECTION.

THE splendid collection of modern pictures presented to the nation by Mr. Sheepshanks seems, if we may judge by the numbers that crowd to see it, to have added greatly to the enjoyment of the people.* That it is thoroughly enjoyed by many cannot be doubted; but the great body of the nation, although they begin to spend their holidays in galleries and exhibitions of art and science, and to seek in them a refining and improving recreation, cannot possibly possess the art-knowledge necessary for the full appreciation of such exhibitions. Such art-knowledge is the result of deep study, close observation, and refined taste: it cannot be within the reach of all.

* Since this was written, the Vernon and the Turner Galleries have been added to the attractions of the South Kensington Museum.

Nevertheless, a degree of this knowledge sufficient to increase immensely the pleasure to be derived from works of art, is, beyond a doubt, attainable by any person of common observation and capacity. Nature has given such an one, no less than to the connoisseur, an eye to observe, a heart to feel, reason and judgment to form an opinion, on what is presented to view. There is so much nonsense talked and written on the subject of "art-knowledge" and "art-taste," and "æsthetics," (as the phrases now are,) that we must address to the common sense and sound judgment of our readers a few hints as to how to enjoy a picture gallery.

The fault in most observers of works of art is, that they pretend to an acquaintance with the technicalities of criticism; to see merits which it is not possible they should understand; to talk of art like artists. In this they mistake their province entirely. They are not expected to criticise the execution, so much as to comprehend the intention of the artist, whose business it is to make himself intelligible to them, since he paints for the unlearned no less than the initiated; and the pleasure of the former will consist in apprehending and feeling what the painter aims to show. If he does not succeed in making them do this, it must be either his fault in not using his means rightly, or theirs in not observing well. A person ignorant of art need only notice how the artist tells his story—how far the expression of the faces (in subject pictures) is natural—the attitudes unconstrained and characteristic—the persons such as should be in the scene—the colour consistent with what he has observed in nature, and pleasant to the eye. In so doing, he would remark on things of which he is capable of forming an opinion, and his honest criticism would be valuable to artists, and worth listening to by connoisseurs. We all know that Molière used to read his plays to his old serving-woman Laforest, and to judge by their effect upon her, how far they were true to nature, and likely to be effective. Sir Joshua Reynolds, too, never despised the remarks of ignorant persons or children, conceiving there must be something wrong when such unbiassed critics mistook brown shades under the noses of his portraits for marks of snuff; or wondered why one half of a face was black and the other white.

To an unskilled observer, the subject of a picture is generally the point of chief interest, as well as the one in which he is most qualified to form an opinion, since it requires no professional knowledge to judge whether it be pleasing, powerful, adapted for pictorial representation, or otherwise, and to decide the class to which it belongs.

The subjects of pictures may be ranged under a variety of heads; as religious, pathetic, humorous, historic, and the like; but they may be popularly grouped under two: those which tell their own story at a glance, to observers of every country and class, which speak at once without explanation to the popular mind; and those which require some previous knowledge before the intention of the artist can be apprehended. Of the former class are Mulready's "Giving a Bite," Webster's "Vil-

lage Choir," Landseer's "Jack in Office," etc. Of the latter are, Leslie's "Bourgeois Gentilhomme," Newton's "Portia and Bassano," Cope's "Allegro and Penseroso," etc. Portraits, landscapes, flowers, and paintings of still life, range themselves under the first class. The unskilled observer will probably admire in such pictures rather the closeness with which nature is imitated, than other less generally evident qualities. Connoisseurs know this is only a small merit, because, being entirely a mechanical process, none of the higher faculties are called into exercise to produce it.

Artists who paint for the people at large, conscious of the advantage of subjects of the former class, yet willing to enlarge their range by the admission of many highly picturesque and beautiful, have had recourse to others only a degree less self-explanatory, on account of their all but world-wide notoriety. This has led them to draw largely on Shakespeare and Goldsmith, and thereby they have exposed themselves to the imputation of poverty of invention in thus perpetually returning to the same source.

The necessity that impelled them thither is, however, becoming daily less urgent. Now that education has extended so widely that the humblest artisan can read; now that books are cheapened until the poorest labourer can buy; now that the coachman reads on his box while waiting for the visit of his employer to be concluded; and the errand-boy as he carries his parcels from house to house; our painters may range at will, and without fear of being obscure, through the picturesque scenes of history, biography, and poetry.

The aim of the modern artist, while he desires the suffrage of all, is to produce works that may suit the gallery of the wealthy amateur, the drawing-room of the man of taste, or the parlour of the cultivated and observant man of business. For these purposes, pictures of the exclusively religious or grand historic class are not so much adapted as those which appeal more directly to national and individual feeling. The commonest incidents of every-day life, the homeliest features of persons beloved or famous, the way-side landscape, the cottage kitchen, can give delight, when touched by the hand of genius. Such subjects reach the sympathy of all, and are varied enough to adapt themselves to every phase of the national taste.

And this leads us to remark on the peculiar *nationality* of the British school of art—a quality easily traceable in our annual exhibitions, and nowhere more thoroughly exemplified than in the Sheepshanks collection. If we cast our eyes round on the pictures there, we shall see none of the old-world legends of saints, martyrdoms, and miracles, none of the modern extravagances and horrors, the battle-pieces and nude figures delighted in by continental artists; but our sight is everywhere refreshed with pleasant landscapes, happy or pathetic domestic scenes, incidents rural, moral, or humorous, and the usual sprinkling of subjects from the works of our national poets and dramatists. English patrons of art, now to be met with in almost all ranks, love to furnish the walls

of their living-rooms with objects pleasant to look upon, with representations encouraging to virtue and kindly feeling, touching the heart gently by their pathos, or provoking it to cheerfulness by their humour. If our skies without are often cloudy and dull, we may have perpetual sunshine in the sweet fair heaven of home. What more soothing to the worn man of business, whose eyes have been all day fixed upon the black and white of his ledger, or his correspondence, than the glowing landscapes of Linnel, the grand trees of Constable, the embowered woods and solitary pools of Redgrave, the lovely lanes and wild heaths of Cresswick? The man of the world, disgusted with surface polish and conventional graces, turns with delight to the merry children's sports, the happy rustic homes of Webster. The man of refinement dwells with pleasure on the graceful humour of Leslie's subjects, the grand scenery of Roberts, the reminiscences of travel furnished by the noble landscapes of Stanfield; and one and all, the highest and the lowest, love to surround themselves with portraits of their beloved ones—parents, children, or friends.

Religious subjects touch on the high historic style, which has been little practised or encouraged in England. Benjamin West, who had a monarch for his patron, and a palace wherein to display his works, did indeed confine himself almost wholly to Scripture subjects, of a large size too, commensurate with the space at his disposal; but his success in them has not been considered equal to his aspirations. Hilton painted them less ambitiously, but with a finer feeling; and nearly all the best living painters have given us one or more pictures in this class. Still, they are so few as to be rather the exception than the rule, and cannot be instanced as part of the nationality of British art.

Perhaps a reason for this neglect of religious subjects—so worthy, above all, of the choice of the painter—may be found (apart from their difficulty of execution) in the reserve shown by Englishmen in all outward demonstration in matters of religion. They place their favourite pictures in the common living-rooms, and may have some reluctance to hang subjects purely sacred close to those of a light and humorous character. Prints of sacred subjects from the productions of the old masters are indeed common in such situations; but these are looked upon too much as mere works of art, or as representatives, as to subjects, of a form of faith no longer national. It may be an excess of feeling in a right direction which keeps religion, and all immediate expression of it, so much out of sight; but it deprives us of many a powerful and beautiful incentive to holy thought in our dwellings.

As an illustration of the pleasure to be derived, even by the novice in art, from the contemplation of a good picture, we will imagine an unskilled observer placing himself in front of Landseer's "Jack in Office" in the Sheepshanks collection, and preparing to study it attentively.

For one moment, the low, almost vulgar, incident chosen for the subject may surprise, but how soon does our intelligent critic catch its humour, and see the skill and beauty of its treatment. A ven-

der of dogs' meat has left his barrow in charge of his dog, and the odours of the feast have attracted all the hungry curs of the neighbourhood. Every one is familiar with the scene: it is only true genius that could form it into a picture—and such a picture!

Look at the bloated animal left in charge. What an embodiment of the insolence of place! Fed to repletion himself, he has no sympathy with the hungry creatures around. See the self-complacent attitude—the half-shut, yet watchful eye—the consciousness of power and place. That starveling hound, with head advanced and body shrinking back, cringing, wistful, trembling, will be scared easily by a growl, if he venture to approach nearer to the tempting morsel on the skewer; the humble suppliant spaniel behind will only look and long; there is more to be apprehended from the pert terrier at the back of the group, who looks as if he had impudence enough, and only wanted courage, for the venture. Who has not often observed that very action of the creature, nose in air, as if indignant, yet really snuffing the scent that is to give him boldness for the onslaught. How perfectly canine is the expression of each animal! how true to the instincts of each peculiar breed and kind! This truthful observance of nature gives to a subject, otherwise so mean, an interest and a charm which makes it attractive to the most refined, no less than to the most common observers. For here is nothing overdone or exaggerated: the actions and expressions of the animals are not beyond animal nature; in the common scene there is nothing coarse or vulgar. That which, in the hands of the old Dutch masters, would have been disgusting, is here simply beautiful, from its completeness, finish, and truth; every detail, even to the scales, the basket, the horn, and skewers, being in character with the scene, and helping on the story. The fine effect of the whole, as to colour, will also not be lost on our observer: it is, indeed, almost unrivalled in this quality among the works of Landseer.

And while our critic enjoys the rich humour of the picture, he will not pass over without notice the moral lesson it conveys. He will see what thoroughly animal, not to say bestial, propensities are greediness, meanness, servility, and coward fear; how ridiculous and despicable the insolence of a bully, clothed with a little brief authority, to which neither character nor talent entitle him; and he can never afterwards see a Jack in Office, surrounded by servile, cringing parasites, without recalling to mind this inimitable picture.

Tracing the story in a picture, independent of all criticism, is itself a source of great interest. Fuseli used to say that no one equalled Raphael in the power of making a picture tell its story. The remark may be true as regards the old masters; among moderns there is no want of skill in this particular. Hogarth's pictures are remarkable for this power; so are Wilkie's.

If, for a time, the observer will confine himself to viewing pictures of acknowledged excellence, without attempting criticism, he will, from the careful study of the artist's intentions, be gradu-

ally and insensibly led to approach beauty of form, colour, and composition, to miss them where they are deficient, and to turn instinctively from what is inferior to the full enjoyment of the best works of art.

MY BROTHER'S BILL OF FARE.

I HAVE just risen from the perusal of a book by Mr. Simmons, called the "Curiosities of Animal Food," (the materials of which he has industriously collected and authenticated from many sources,) and as a friend of universal man I feel considerably depressed. Even the untutored savage I have admitted to be a man and a brother. I was not aware, however, at the time, of his peculiarities of diet: but that does not efface the admission. He is still a member of the great human family, and I am interested in what he eats. I fear, however, it would be often impossible to cement our fraternity by the usual social process of dining together.

What is a dinner? that is the question. In Siam, the answer is given in the shape of a dish of dried elephant. In Greenland, raw meat prevails, because it produces in the consumer more warmth than cooked meat. A slice of raw blubber, or a chunk of frozen walrus-beef, is there considered delicious, even by Englishmen. Frozen seal is a good native preparation for a long cold journey; but raw bear is the very best travelling food of all. Sledges are very commonly eaten with infinite relish, because they are made of dry frozen salmon, which has acquired an improved (Esquimaux) flavour by its long use and keeping.

What is a dinner? would be answered by my brother, the African bushman, with a table covered with roots, bulbs, wild garlic, the core of aloes, the gum of acacias, berries, the larvæ of ants, lizards, locusts, and grasshoppers; while his twin, the Kaffir, would produce nothing but a dish of sour curdled milk, with a little millet. My brother, the Indian of Brazil, sustains himself upon rats and other small vermin, snakes, and alligators; while another brother, the aboriginal Australian, feeds upon the opossum, the wombat, the wallaby, the bandicoot, and the bounding kangaroo. My Chinese brother gets fat upon worms, sea-slugs, horses, black frogs, unhatched putrid ducks and chickens, rotten eggs, dogs and puppies, besides the aristocratic and costly birds'-nests. The food of my brother, the Dyak of Borneo, is sometimes a snake, sometimes an alligator (if small), and sometimes a monkey. My Abyssinian brother, I am sorry to say, leads a very unsteady life, and makes himself positively drunk upon various kinds of raw flesh.

What is a dinner? is answered by the African epicure with a tender young monkey, highly seasoned and spiced, and baked in a jar set in the earth, with a fire over it, in gipsy-fashion. It is answered by the low Arab with a feast of hyena, although the smell of the carcase is so rank and offensive that even dogs leave it with disgust. It is answered by the natives of North America with a pole-cat, although the animal is considered too pestilent for human food. It is answered in Italy

with a fox; and in the Arctic regions, again, with a fox-pie. It is answered by the Indians of North America with a dish of prairie-wolf; by the natives of Demerara with a dish of sloth; by the Hottentots with a dish of lion; and by the natives of the Malay Peninsula with a dish of tiger.

The question is answered by the Dutch and Hottentots with a dish of smoked porcupines; by the Africans with baked elephant's paws; by Bushmen and Dutch colonists with a dish of salted hippopotami; and by the Abyssinians with a dish of rhinoceros.

In France the question will be soon answered (if Monsieur Saint Hilaire should overcome the general prejudice) with countless dishes of horse-flesh; and in Tartary it is already answered with a feast of donkeys. Greeks and Romans have found the ass palatable before this; and Central Asia revels in it to this hour. In Barbary it is answered by a dish of camel's-flesh; and by the Hottentots with a dish of giraffe and giraffe-marrow. It is answered in Southern Guinea by a dish of boa-constrictor; and in Ceylon with a feast of the destructive anaconda. It is answered at the Havana by a dish of shark; by the Barotse of Central Africa by a dish of alligator; and by Dr. Livingstone (in a case of need) by two mice, and a light blue-coloured mole.

My brother feeds upon more insects in different parts of the world than is generally supposed. The larva or grub of one of the species of beetles which infest cocoa-nut trees, is considered a great delicacy in British Guiana; and it is dressed by frying in a pan. The Goliath beetles are roasted and eaten by our brother in South America and Western Africa, although I, as an entomologist, have at one time given fifty pounds for a specimen of these insects, and am now willing to give five guineas. The untutored savage here goes beyond Heliogabalus. In Africa my brother revels in locusts, salted, smoked, roasted, boiled and fried. They are carried into the towns by waggon-loads, like poultry when brought to market. In California, the digger Indian regales himself with grasshoppers roasted in a bag with salt; or sometimes made into grasshopper soup; and in Siam the greatest luxury that my brother can give me is a dish of ants' eggs, curried, rolled in green leaves, and mingled with shreds of fat pork. In Ceylon my brother feasts upon bees; in Africa (as a Bushman) he eats the caterpillar of the butterfly, and in China he sends to table the chrysalis of the silkworm. In New Caledonia my brother seeks for a spider nearly an inch long, which he eats, after having roasted it over a fire; and in France, America, Tuscany, and Austria, he feeds more or less largely upon boiled snails.

In Samoa, Navigator's Islands, South Pacific Ocean, my brother watches for the sea-worm, which in size may be compared to very fine straw, and which he eats, both dressed and undressed, with extraordinary avidity.

Such are only some few of the many delicacies in which my brother indulges in different parts of the world; most of them, when brought to table, being very slightly improved by the art of the butcher or the cook. Nearer home, there are many

mysteries of diet which science and investigating industry have not yet been able to explain. Although every other part of the dead horses annually killed in our knackers' yards has been satisfactorily accounted for, their hearts and tongues have never yet been traced, as a placard in the Food Museum at South Kensington informs us.

My brother, under some conditions of existence, feeds upon an unctuous kind of earth; and, under others, upon seaweed and rattlesnake-soup. These things are his daily food, although they are not mine; and while I am laughing or shuddering at him, he, in the pride of his shallow civilization, is laughing or shuddering at me.

What shall we have for dinner? was a question that lately attracted much public notice, and various and amusing were the solutions of the social difficulty. But Mr. Simmons' book opens up a far wider range of inquiry. There are other things, it seems, to be taken into account, besides the cost of the feast.

NEW CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

PHYSICAL DEFECTS OF AUTHORS.

It is the opinion of many, that deformity is an incentive to distinction. In one of Byron's letters to Mr. Hunt, he declares it to be his own belief, that "an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of an uneasy mind in an uneasy body: and disease or deformity," he adds, "have been the attendants of many of our best." "Whosoever," says Lord Bacon, "hath anything fixed in his person, that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn;" adding that, "in a great art, deformity is an advantage in rising." Without putting much faith in these remarks, we well know that many men eminent in literature and science have had physical defects, and that those defects have, in some instances, influenced them in their writings.

Milton's eyesight was defective at an early period of his life. To some extent, he derived it from his mother; and the evil was increased by the "wearisome studies and midnight watchings" of his youth. In 1655, addressing his friend Cyriack Skinner, he writes in one of his noble sonnets:—

"Cyriack, this three years' day, these eyes though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man or woman."

We here learn, by inference, that it was in 1652 that he lost his sight, and that, in three years more, he gave up his office of Foreign Secretary of State, on account of being then incapacitated for his duties. His enemies had the baseness to charge this blindness as a judgment upon him; he repelled the charge with a just indignation, at the opening of his "Second Defence for the People of England." "Though I have accurately examined my conduct," he writes, "and scrutinized my soul, I call thee, O God, the searcher of hearts, to witness that I am not conscious, either in the

more early or in the later periods of my life, of having committed any enormity which might deservedly have marked me out as a fit object for such a calamitous visitation; but, since my enemies boast that this affliction is only a retribution for the transgressions of my pen, I again invoke the Almighty to witness that I never at any time wrote anything which I did not think agreeable to truth, to justice, and to piety." Gray, with a poet's licence, accounts for the blindness thus:—

"He passed the flaming bounds of space and time:
The living throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night."

Nicholas Saunderson was a distinguished mathematician, and author of one of the best treatises on algebra in the English language. "From his cradle he had never seen soul-cheering sunbeams, or wild nature's green;" for he was deprived, by the small-pox, when he was twelve months old, not only of his sight, but of his eyes also, for they came away in abscesses. Although "Providence had dealt him one long night," yet, when prosecuting his studies, he needed but a good author, and some person to read it to him, being able, by the strength of his own abilities, to surmount all difficulties that might occur. His lectures in after years, at the University of Cambridge, were crowded. He—a blind man—discoursed most admirably on the nature of light and colours; he explained the theory of vision, the effect of glasses, the phenomena of the rainbow, and other objects of sight.*

In Mrs. Piozzi's "Anecdotes of Samuel Johnson," we are told that, at the age of two years, he was brought up to London from Litchfield by his mother, to be touched by Queen Anne "for the scrofulous evil, which terribly afflicted his childhood, and left such marks as greatly disfigured a countenance naturally harsh and rugged, besides doing irreparable injury to the auricular organs, which never could perform their functions since I knew him; and it was owing to that terrible disorder, too, that one eye was perfectly useless to him." The most partial of his friends, Madame d'Arblay, also describes him "as very ill-favoured" and "shockingly near-sighted." The fore parts of his wigs were burned away by the near approach of the candle, which this short-sightedness rendered necessary in reading. At Streatham, Mr. Thrale's butler always had a better wig ready; and, as Johnson passed from the drawing-room when dinner was announced, the servant would remove the ordinary wig, and replace it with the newer one; and this judicious ceremony was performed every day. When Sir Joshua Reynolds had painted his portrait looking into the slit of his pen, and holding it close to his eye, as was his custom, he was greatly displeased, and said, "he would not be known by posterity for his defects only, let Sir Joshua do his worst." It was observed by some friend that the painter had no such sensitiveness

* It may be as well if I remind some of my readers, that the science of optics is altogether to be explained by lines, and is subject to the rules of geometry.

about himself, for that his own portrait represented him holding his ear in his hand to catch the sound. "He may paint himself as deaf as he chooses," replied Johnson, "but I will not be *blinking Sam*." We learn from another source that Boswell added five hundred pounds to the fortune of one of his babies, because she was not terrified at Johnson's ugly face.

William H. Prescott, author of the histories of the "Conquest of Mexico," of "Ferdinand and Isabella," of the "Conquest of Peru," etc., states, in the preface of the first-named work, that, "owing to the state of my eyes, I have been obliged to use a writing-case made for the blind, which does not permit the writer to see his own manuscript."

Among the instances on record of persons whose powers of vision have been so defective that they could not distinguish colours, at least some colours, is that of Dugald Stewart, who could recognise the Siberian crab upon the tree, not by its colour, but by its form only, from the leaves that were near it.

Quevedo, a celebrated Spanish writer, so injured his sight by indefatigable reading, that in the prime of life he was incapable of distinguishing any object at the distance of three paces. This was not his only defect; he also had crooked legs.

In consequence of neglecting a cold when young, Bishop Jewell contracted a lameness which attended him to the grave.

Bishop Hooker, according to his biographer, Isaac Walton, was of "a mean stature and stooping, and yet more lowly in the thoughts of his soul; his body worn out, not with age, but study and holy mortification; his face full of heat-pimples, on account of his inactivity and sedentary life. And to this true character of his person, let me add this of his disposition and behaviour: God blessed him with so great a bashfulness, that as, in his younger days, his pupils might easily look him out of countenance; so neither then, nor in his age, did he ever willingly look any man in the face; and was of so mild and humble a nature, that his poor parish clerk and he did never talk but with both their hats on, or both off at the same time; and to this may be added, that though he was not purblind, yet he was short or weak-sighted; and where he fixed his eyes at the beginning of his sermon, there they continued till it was ended."

By an accident which, it is said, occurred at the time of his birth, one of Byron's feet was twisted out of its natural position. All through his life this lame foot troubled his spirit. Most men would have outgrown the remembrance of so small an evil; but Byron never did; and suffered his club-foot to embitter and to discolour his whole existence. One of the most striking passages in his own memoir, which related to his early days, is when, in speaking to his own sensitiveness on the subject of his deformed foot, he described the feeling of horror and humiliation that came over him when his mother, in one of her unnatural fits of passion, called him "a lame brat." This terrible expression for a mother to use to her own child, is recorded in the opening of "The Deformed Transformed."

"Bertha. Out, Hunchback!
Arnold. I was born so, mother."

It has been supposed by some, that the whole poem was indebted for its origin to this recollection. When in love with Miss Chaworth, he either was told of it, or heard the lady saying to her maid, "Do you think I could care any thing for that lame boy?" This speech was like a shot to his heart. Though late at night when he heard it, he instantly darted out of the house, and, scarcely knowing whither he ran, never stopped till he found himself at Newstead.

Before Sir Walter Scott was two years old, he had a fall out of the arms of a careless nurse, which injured his right foot, and rendered him lame for life. This accident did not otherwise affect his health. Now, note the difference between the effect of lameness on Scott and on Byron. The circumstance of his lame foot seems to have prompted Scott to take the lead among all the stirring boys in the street where he lived, or the school which he attended; he desired, no doubt, to show them that there was a spirit which could triumph over every impediment. During George the Fourth's visit to Edinburgh, Sir Walter gave a dinner to some select friends, among whom were Wilkie and Collins, the celebrated painters. When the table was cleared, after the meal, Scott, in the exuberance of his loyalty and hospitality, volunteered to sing his own song, "Carle, now the king's come." The whole company gave the chorus; and their host, notwithstanding his lameness,

"Into such strange vagaries fell,
As he would dance."

He accordingly sprang up, and, calling upon everybody to join hands, made his guests dance with him round the table, to the measure of the tune. "The effect of this latter exercise," says Collins, who tells the story, "indulged in by a set of performers, all more or less illustrious in the world's eye, and all, with few exceptions, of intensely anti-saltatory habits, would defy the pen of a Rabelais, or the pencil of a Hogarth."

The person of Alexander Pope is well known not to have been formed to the nicest model. He has, in his account of the "Little Club," compared himself to a spider; but the most common appellation applied to him is "the little hunchback of Twickenham." He is said to have been beautiful in infancy; he was, however, of a constitution originally feeble and weak; and as bodies of a tender frame are easily distorted, his deformity was probably in part the effect of his application. His stature was so low that, to bring him to a level with common tables, it was necessary to raise his seat. When he rose from bed, he was able to hold himself erect only for a short time, until a bodice which he wore was laced. One side was contracted. His legs were so slender that he enlarged their bulk with three pairs of stockings.

Professor Tennant, though born without any personal malformation, lost the use of his feet at an early period of his childhood, so that through his life he was compelled to walk on crutches.

"I remember," says William Hazlitt, in his "Essay on Reading New Books," "that Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, as he was called, showed with some triumph two of his fingers which had

been bent, so that he had lost the use of them, in copying out the manuscripts of Proclus and Plotinus in a fine Greek hand."

Julius Caesar, having often found himself exposed to the ridicule of his enemies on account of his baldness, always exercised his right of wearing a laurel crown. Indeed, this privilege he accepted with more pleasure than any other of the honours conferred upon him by the senate and people.

"The first of Cæsars was a bald-head,
And loved his laurels better as a wig
(So History says), than as a glory."

Richard Cumberland, in his "Life," informs us that Soame Jenyns had a protuberant wen "just under his poll. His eyes were protruded like the eyes of a lobster, who wears them at the end of his feelers, and yet there was room between one of these and his nose for another wen, that added nothing to his beauty. Yet I heard this good man, excellent writer, and pleasant companion, very innocently remark, when Gibbon published his history, that he wondered anybody so ugly could write a book!"

Charles Lamb, the "genial Elia," had an unfortunate impediment in his speech. This is said to have been the cause of a pun. Some one was mentioning in his presence the cold-heartedness of the Duke of Cumberland, in restraining the Duchess in rushing up to the embrace of her son, whom she had not seen for a considerable time, and insisted on her receiving him in state. "How horribly cold it was," said the narrator. "Yes," said Lamb, in his stuttering way, "but you know he is the Duke of *Cu-cum-ber-land*." At one part of his life, Charles was ordered to the sea-side for the benefit of bathing; but not possessing strength of nerve sufficient to throw himself into the water, he yielded himself up to two men to "plunge" him. On the first morning, having prepared for immersion, he placed himself between the two, meaning to give the previously requisite instructions which his particular case required; but, from the agitated state he was in—from terror of what he might possibly "suffer" from a "sea-change"—his stammering became greater than usual, and this infirmity prevented his directions being as prompt as was necessary. Standing with a man at either elbow, he began:

"I—I—I'm to be di-i-ipped—" The men answered the instruction with a ready, "Yes, sir!" and in they soused him.

As soon as he rose, and could regain a portion of his lost breath, he stammered out as before, "I—I—I'm to be di-i-ipped—"

Another hearty "Yes, sir!" and down he went a second time.

Again he rose; and then, with a struggle, which the men were too much accustomed to on such occasions to heed, he made an effort for freedom; but, not succeeding, he articulated as at first—

"I—I—I'm to be di-i-ipped—"

"Yes, sir!" and to the bottom he went again; when Lamb, rising for the third time to the surface, shrieked out in desperate energy, "O—O—only ONCE!"

VARIETIES.

A KINDLY REPROOF.—John Wesley, having to travel some distance in a stage-coach, fell in with a pleasant-tempered, well-informed officer. His conversation was sprightly and entertaining, but frequently mingled with oaths. When they were about to take the last stage, Mr. Wesley took the officer apart, and after expressing the pleasure he had enjoyed in his company, told him he was thereby encouraged to ask of him a very great favour. "I would take a pleasure in obliging you," said the officer, "and I am sure you will not make an unreasonable request." "Then," said Mr. Wesley, "as we have to travel together some time, I beg that if I should so far forget myself as to swear, you will kindly *reprove me*." The officer immediately saw the motive, felt the force of the request, and with a smile thanked Mr. Wesley.

WHISPERING IN ST. PAUL'S.—At a recent ordinary meeting of the Royal Institute of Architects, Mr. Parris, who renovated the painting in the dome of St. Paul's, said he had remarked from his experience of that cathedral, that he could be heard distinctly at the distance of 220 feet, when he was immediately under the eye of the dome. Any person standing on a particular part of the pavement below, at a right angle, or nearly at a right angle from where his voice would strike the roof, could hear even a whisper with the greatest distinctness; in fact, he had often held conversations in that way. He believed Mr. Penrose had likewise tried the experiment. As he moved to a different part of the dome, the person below would have to move to a different position, but in the same angle; when this became too great the voice was lost. He had often tried the experiment, and found that the reverberations in a dome were always repeated thirty-two times, exactly corresponding with the points of the compass. It was the same at the Colosseum (London), where he had tried it with the flute, voice, and every means. He had tried experiments in the same way in St. Paul's, upon the level of the organ, and above and beneath it, and he found invariably that the sound was always best heard at the point opposite to where the voice had struck. It was precisely the same with the voice ascending as descending; in fact, his attention had been called to the matter by hearing a man below ask another for sixpence; he exclaimed, "Take care, he is giving you a bad one;" and the man immediately turned round, surprised as to where the voice could be coming from.—*The Builder*.

THE ARTESIAN WELL AT GRENELLE, PARIS.—In the year 1833, M. Mulot was charged by the Municipal Council of the City of Paris with the boring of an artesian well upon the left bank of the Seine, on the Place Breteuil, a vast space of ground extending in front of the Abattoir de Grenelle, not far from the Hotel des Invalides. The workmen commenced on the 24th of September, 1833, and one may be able to form a notion of the innumerable difficulties that the skilful geological engineer must have encountered when one knows that the works of boring and tubage were not completed till the 26th of February, 1841—more than seven years of tribulations, accidents, and deceptions, which would have disheartened most engineers. But M. Mulot promising always success in a manner so certain, and based upon serious geological documents and calculations, the men betook themselves with vigour to the work, and the implements of their apparatus brought away successively the different beds of earth marked upon the geological map traced *à priori*. At last the green sand was reached; it was the last bed of earth, and the water leaped up with impetuosity. The borer had arrived at the extraordinary and predicted depth of about 1790 English feet. It was necessary to add to this depth an ascending tube of 110 feet, so as to attain the height the water was to reach—that is to say, about 1900 feet from its starting-point. The water is produced from the pluvial filtrations of the lands of Champagne. In the centre of the Place Breteuil

they are about to erect the fountain from the designs of M. Ivoa, the engineer. In the centre of a circular stone basin, bordered by a railing, raised upon a stone base, rises the new tube of ascent. Round this tube circles a spiral staircase, consisting of 150 open steps two feet six inches in width, which conduct to the platform of the campanile, the terminal of which is raised one hundred and thirty-nine feet eight inches above the ground. The inclosure of the staircase is of hexagonal form, and six feet ten inches wide. Four external platforms or balconies encircle the monument, and project gushing sheets of bubbling water.

ENGLISHMEN AND FRENCHMEN.—With the English, the man, the individual, is everything. Society is to him but the frame in which he expands his individual energies; but it is not on society he relies; he relies on himself. With the French, on the contrary, society is everything. The individual regards himself but as a component part of society, a drop mixed up with millions of drops; he believes not in himself, but in society; and it is from this belief that each Frenchman might say, "My name is legion." People in England will say, "I am an Englishman;" there you have the article of individuality "an," and there you have the "man." You have him in the Scotchman, Irishman, nobleman, gentleman, alderman, yeoman, the liverman, and in the old form of address, "Ye men of England"—everywhere you meet the "man." The designation of nationality, rank, office, are but adjectives with him; the man is the substantive. Your neighbour there across the Channel will not say that he is a Frenchman; he will say that he is French, he drops his personality and makes himself an adjective; his country is his substantive. Verily, the language of a nation is the mirror of its character. Hence the French genius centralizes; the English individualizes. The French can tell of a powerful State; the English of a free nation, which never feared, nor never will fear, any power on earth. The French have struggled much for freedom, but scarcely ever were free; the English have struggled but little for it, and nearly always were free.—*Kossuth*.

PREVENTION OF DAMP IN GROUND-FLOORS.—A very few years back, no provision was made to guard against the absorption of moisture in the foundation walls of a house; latterly, every working bricklayer knows that by the use of a single layer of slate (fixed in cement), ever so little above the ground range of a foundation, the rise of damp in walls is repressed. What a catalogue of evils is avoided by this simple provision! The servants of an establishment are saved from all the penalties which damp walls are sure to entail upon the occupant of a basement story; all the aches to which the human constitution is subject are at once obviated; and apartments which, built on the surface, were formerly damp some two or three feet upward, or if sunken only four feet below the level were damp to the ceiling, are now perfectly dry, and fit for sleeping-rooms.—*The Builder*.

SAGACITY OF RATS.—Incredible as the story may appear of their removing hens' eggs by one fellow lying on his back and grasping tightly his ovoid burden with his fore paws, whilst his comrades drag him away by the tail, we have no reason to disbelieve it, knowing, as we do, that they will carry eggs from the bottom to the top of the house, lifting them from stair to stair, the first pushing them up on its hind, and the second lifting them with its fore legs. They will extract the cotton from a flask of Florence oil, dipping in their long tails, and repeating the manoeuvre until they had consumed every drop. We have found lumps of sugar in deep drawers at a distance of thirty feet from the place where the petty larceny was committed; and a friend saw a rat mount a table on which a drum of figs was placed, and straightway tip it over, scattering its contents on the floor beneath, where a score of his expectant brethren sat watching for the windfall.—*Quarterly Review*.